Daily Eagle

A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING.

'Twas the clipping from a paper
Telling of some funny caper
On the stage;
So I read it every letter,
Saying that I'd seen no better
For an age.

Then I turned the clipping over
With no purpose to discover
What was there.
But in smiling contemplation
Of the humorist's creation,
Rich and rare.

As I looked I know I started
And the smile from lips departed,
For I saw,
Printed there in uncut column,
Notices of death, sad, solemn,
Full of awe.

So, I thought, come grief and pleasure,
Meted out with equal measure;
You may laugh,
For some other one is wailing,
For the tear is smiles unfailing
Other half.

—Columbus Dispatch.

MUTINY ON A GOLD SHIP.

It was our last Friday night at Castle Bluff boarding school. Most of the girls were gone, and the few who lived in or around New York, and were obliged to remain until Saturday morning, were counting the hours of captivity.

It was a dismal night. The rain beat a ceaseless tattoo upon the piazza roof, while the honeysuckle scraped an accompaniment upon the panes; the wind piped shrilly, and every now and then, as it shifted, we could hear the roar of the breakers at Forlorn Hope. We were huddled together, seven girls, in the study parlor, grumbling because the evening train for New York was an express, and so did not stop at Castle Bluff.

"I would have cut the closing exercises and taken the 2 o'clock train if the 'General' would have let me," said Sarah Priest, frowning.

"The General" was our name for our principal, Mrs. M., whose imposing carriage suggested the title which Dickens bestows on one of his characters.

"Our sacerdotal friend seems pensive to-night," I remarked, mischievously. "What entertainment would your Reverence be pleased to countenance?" I added, turning to Sarah. The poor girl had to answer to a great many punning variations of her name. Indeed, we all bore school names. Mine was "Gaul," given me by the class in "Cæsar's Commentaries," as an improvement on "France," otherwise Frances. Minnie Walsh, the most diminutive girl in school, was "Cardiff Giant," abbreviated to "Cardie;" Jennie Shepherd was known as "Shepherdess" or "Bopeep;" Bertha Hein, who was always "willin'," was "Barkis;" "Lib" Chamberlain, a high spirited, independent girl, was called "Liberty."

I had been reading aloud from "Our Mutual Friend," but finding my audience too restless to listen, I closed the book and walked to the window.

"No use to watch for the steamer to-night, girls," I said; "you couldn't sight the Great Eastern a boat's length away."

"Oh, how nautical!" remarked Jennie. "Have you been taking lessons of Mrs. Jones?"

"Well, I'm not so sure that it wouldn't be a good idea to have a lesson from Mrs. Jones," I said. "What do you say to one of her 'sailors' yarns,' as she calls them?"

"Just the thing," exclaimed Alice.

"Let's get her to tell us a real live blood-and-thunder-your-money-or-your-life pirate story."

"Run along and prepare her, Gaul," said Lib, Alice's chum. "We will follow in a procession."

"Come, girls," cried Alice, "form a line. Choose partners! 'Bub as for me,'" seizing her chum, "'give me Liberty, or give me death!'"

We found the matron sitting before a little wood fire, working a cushion for a fair.

It was almost equal to a voyage around the world to go into Mrs. Jones' room. On the mantel and shelves were foreign shells and different kinds of corals, from the massive brain coral of the West Indies to the delicate pink specimens from the Micronesian Islands, also stuffed birds, bits of ore from Australia and Spanish souvenirs. Over a photograph of Windsor castle the Stars and Stripes mingled their folds with those of the Union Jack. Above the flags hung a colored lithograph of H.M.S. Three Jolly Tars, which, although represented as scudding before a "large" wind on a heavy sea, had all her canvas set.

Mrs. Jones was fond of young people, and glad to relax the strict rules of school discipline.

"Is that you, Miss Bailey?" said she. "Come in, and Miss Priest, too. How many girls are there of you?" she asked, catching sight of a line in the hall.

"We are seven," said Alice, as we distributed ourselves about the room.

"I wish there were twice as many!" said the matron, with one of her genial laughs. "I suppose you are all glad to be off duty and done with that examining board for the term."

"In what country were you born, Mrs. Jones?" I asked, partly to set the ball rolling and partly to settle a disputed point.

"In no country," answered the lady. "I'm the woman 'without a country.'" After enjoying our perplexity for a while she added, "I was born on the high seas."

"But of what nationality are you?" I persisted.

"I can hardly tell you, my dear," rejoined Mrs. Jones. "Perhaps African, as much as any, for I was born at sea off Cape of Good Hope. My father was an English sea captain, and he married my mother, who was a Spanish lady, in Madrid.

"I lived on board ship—the Three Jolly Tars—until I was 16, so you see that picture is a view of my birthplace and early home. My father was captain of that vessel for twenty-eight years.

"When I was 16 I was married in England, and went to housekeeping in Australia. I married a sea captain and made many voyages with him, so that much of my life has been passed on shipboard. It would really seem more home like to me than living on land, if my husband and children were alive and could be with me."

"But isn't it dreadfully monotonous—the same thing, day after day?" inquired Jennie.

"Dear, no!" said the matron. "If you are not a mere passenger impatient to be at your journey's end, you can have as much home life on shipboard as anywhere. As to monotony, the sea is the most variable thing in the world, hardly alike two days in succession."

"Didn't you ever meet any nice pirates or have any mutinies on board, or anything of that sort, you know?" Alice remarked persuasively.

Mrs. Jones laughed. "Not exactly," she said; "but we had a bit of a scare on one voyage. Perhaps you would like to hear about that?"

We gathered around, and she began:

"My husband was captain of the Bonanza, a ship running between Melbourne and Liverpool, some twenty-five years ago. I shall never forget the first voyage I made with him. Vessels did not go so fast then as they do now, and I remember that we were just five months and three days from Phillips' dock, Liverpool.

"Our freight was gold dust for the return trip, and the worst of it was that we could get a crew only of convicts. Our own sailors caught the gold fever, which was running very high then, and while the ship was lying at Melbourne ran away to the gold fields to prospect for themselves. These convicts were old sailors who had been transported for crime, but who had served out their terms and wished to return to England by working their passage. David—that was my husband's name—said we could do no better than to take them, and he hadn't the slightest fear that they would make any trouble; they were too anxious to get back to England.

"All seemed to go well for a while, but after we had been out to sea for some time, it seemed to my husband as if the Bonanza was a little off her bearings; so the first bright day he took an observation. He was shut up for about an hour making the calculations. When he came out I saw by his face that something was wrong. He went aft and spent some time with the helmsman. He had found that the Bonanza was off her bearings, sure enough. The man at the wheel told him that she wouldn't mind her helm—that she was water logged. This got about among the passengers, and they began to be nervous; so my husband announced that he would make an examination, and invited two of the passengers to accompany him into the hold. They went down into the lower hold, where the ballast is stowed, and found the ship was all right. The captain sent the boatswain aloft to give out through the trumpet that the report was false.

"After this I could see that David was uneasy, although I did not then understand why.

"I awoke one night just before seven bells struck. When I heard the bells, I knew that it was only half past 3, and was trying to get to sleep again, when my ears, which are exceptionally quick, caught a peculiar scraping sound under the floor. There would not seem to be anything alarming about this, for most ships are full of rats, but the fact was, that the gold tank was built into the ship just under the captain's berth, the only entrance being by a trap door. If this scraping came from the tank it could not be rats, for no rat who had any respect for his teeth would be likely to experiment on the zinc lining. A few nights afterward I heard the noise again, and felt sure it was some sharp instrument working on a metallic surface. I awakened David, but he could not hear anything, and said that it must be my imagination.

"Soon after this, I noticed that a curious change had come over Arnie, our cabin boy. His whole name was Arnold McIntyre. He was really very young for the place, but I had been pleased with his appearance and induced my husband to take him. This was the boy's first trip. His father had been a prosperous squatter in Australia, a Scotchman by birth, and a fine man.

"One night the father was awakened by the barking of the dogs, and on going to the door found a gang of bush rangers surrounding the house. They evidently knew that he had been selling cattle that day and had brought home a large sum of money. It is not likely that they intended to harm him, for it was only the money that they were after, but he showed fight and knocked two of them down.

"Well, the end of it was that the poor Scotchman got a bullet through his head, and the bush rangers rode away with everything valuable. Mrs. McIntyre was never the same again. She lost her wits, let the baby fall on its head (in consequence of which it died not long afterward), and she took no notice of Arnie. He was a bright, clever lad, and it seemed a pity that he should go to destruction, so we took care of him. He was very fond of us, and I took great pleasure in teaching him, for he was very grateful and a quick scholar.

"All at once, as I said, a great change seemed to have come over him. He came into the cabin one morning as white as a piece of canvas, and I noticed that his arm shook so that he had to carry the captain's coffee cup with both hands. He declared he was well, and seemed to be startled when we spoke suddenly to him; but during breakfast I often noticed that he was gazing at us with an indescribable expression. I have seen something like it in the face of a dumb animal when it is trying in vain to make itself understood by a human being.

"I was sitting on deck with my work, one pleasant morning soon after, when, happening to need a book which was below, I sent Arnie down to get it. When he handed it to me there was a folded slip of paper between the leaves; a single word was scrawled upon it—the word 'Mutiny.'

"That day when we had finished our dinner, the captain rose in his place and made a short speech. He said something like this:

"'Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to have a few straight words with you. I do not wish to cause alarm, and hope there is no occasion for any, but I think it best that there should be a fair understanding between us, as to how matters stand. I have reason to believe that all is not right on board—that there is mischief brewing among the crew. If I can have the support of the passengers I feel sure that I can manage the men. There must be no panic among you. It is absolutely necessary that all be calm, watchful and self controlled. I believe that you will be. I think I can trust you and shall expect you to sustain me. We will look this danger in the face, and we shall see whether a dozen true Englishmen can be cowed by a gang of convicts!'

"The speech had the effect my husband desired. The passengers felt that he trusted to their honor and courage, and the gentlemen all promised to be ready to stand by him in any emergency. The captain had all hands piped on deck and we followed. The crew were a hard looking set of fellows, most of them, with rough, unshaven, scarred faces, and they glowered at the captain from under their heavy eyebrows like wild beasts.

"My husband was not much of an orator, but when a man's blood is up he can talk, if he ever can; and I assure you he laid down the law to those men in words they could understand.

"'There is not a man of you,' he said, 'who dares look me in the eye and say that he has received anything but fair play from me, or the subordinate officers, since he shipped on the Bonanza. Your past lives have not been such as would lead a man to put confidence in you. The world has not been the better for your living in it, but I have treated you as if you had been the most honorable men in England. You have had a chance to show that there was something of true manhood left in you, yet. Now, how have you returned this? I will tell you! You mean mischief! I understand this as well as you do. Your plot is known to me, and the time has come for you to give an account of it. You will find that I am not a man to be trifled with. I am master of this ship, and I intend to remain so. The Bonanza is freighted with gold dust, and I shall defend her with my life! I command you all, as true British sailors, to bring forward your arms and lay them on the capstan!'

"'You may not know that it is against the shipping articles for sailors to carry arms one of the first questions asked when a man ships before the mast is, 'Have you any weapons?'

"There was silence among the men when the captain ceased. We could hear the soft flapping of the sails overhead, and the occasional scraping of a heel, as some one eased his muscles by shifting his weight from one foot to the other. I was standing by the main shrouds and remember counting the ratlines over and over, to help keep my self control. It seemed a brief lifetime to me, but I suppose it was hardly thirty seconds before four men came forward and laid down horse pistols. Not another man stirred. I saw my husband's face redden and his eyes flash angrily.

"'Is no one else true?' he shouted.

"I began to tremble lest he should lose his self control.

"He called for some chalk. Chalk is always kept on board for whitening spots when a ship comes into port. He stooped down and began to draw two lines across the deck in front of him. Suddenly there was a sharp click. My husband had drawn a pistol and cocked it! An instant after he rose to his feet and cried in a voice like thunder, 'You may walk up to that first line and lay down your arms, but if any man crosses the second line I'll shoot him dead!'

"I closed my eyes, but when I looked again I could hardly see the top of the capstan for the bowie knives and pistols that covered it!

"The captain called the sailmaker and whispered a word in his ear. He went below and came up with the irons. The passengers lent a hand, and in a few minutes we had the ringleaders provided for.

"Then the captain thought of Arnie. He said, 'I understand you have got Arnie in tow. Bring him up.' He was brought up, pale as death.

"'Now,' says the captain, 'you've got to tell all you know about this business.'

"The child's lips quivered. 'If I do they will kill me,' he said.

"'You shan't be touched,' said the captain. Still Arnold was afraid to speak. He was trembling in every limb. He was such a little fellow his head did not reach up to my shoulder. It was the hardest work to make him tell what he knew. David had to promise that he should stay in the cabin all the way, and at last he told the whole story and we found everything to be just as he said. He had heard it all while lying in his bunk, and the men bound him by a dreadful oath to secrecy, and swore they would murder him and throw his body overboard if he should betray them. He believed they would, but he felt that he must warn us. He tried to let the captain know in some way without breaking his oath, but could not make him understand, and had given me the scrap of paper as a last resort.

"The convicts had a large supply of weapons, and had bribed the steersman to turn the ship from her course little by little, intending to mutiny and take possession of her. They wished to take her to some strange port and then scuttle her, going ashore in the boats and leaving us to our fate.

"Arnold told which men had weapons in their lockers and where the keys were, and the captain sent and seized the arms. He told us, also, that the ship's cutlasses, which had seemed in good condition at the last inspection, had been deprived of their blades, so that, as we found, only the sheaths and handles remained, and we could not have used them for our defense.

"The boy also told us that two or three attempts had been made to cut through the gold tank, and, on examining, we discovered several places at the side where some sharp instrument had been used. This explained the filing sound I had heard twice.

"Arnie saved our lives, and you may be sure we did not forget it.

"We reached England in safety, and before landing the passengers made up a handsome purse for the boy. He was sent to a good school and well educated, and today Arnold McIntyre is an officer in the royal navy and one of the finest men in her majesty's service."—Frances Stoughton Bailey in St. Nicholas.

The Keen Eyed Lineman.

The other day I was watching some men removing telegraph poles from the streets, and I remarked to a bystander, concerning a man who was on top of a tall, swaying pole: "That's a brave man." "Yes," he replied. "They are plucky fellows, all the linemen, but the most remarkable thing about them is their vision. A bee hunter has no better eye than a competent lineman. The city poles are high and the wires are far from the pavement, yet a lineman can walk at fair speed along the curb and follow with his eye a wire that he has been sent to repair, never confusing it with others, and detect the place where it has been crossed. Now, I suppose, the subways will develop a man with an organism so sensitive that by touch he can tell between which man holes the circuit is broken."—The Epoch.